

East Asia and the Pacific

Australia
China
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Japan
Mongolia
New Zealand
Pacific Island States
Papua New Guinea
Republic of Korea



A first group of Myanmar refugees arriving in Japan under a pilot resettlement programme.

| OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS |

- The first group of Myanmar refugees to be resettled in Japan arrived in the country in September. The 2010 refugee status determination (RSD) statistics for Japan show an overall improvement in the protection space in Japan.
- Through the Bali Process and other fora, UNHCR worked with States to develop a regional approach to refugees and irregular movement in East Asia and the Pacific and beyond, resulting in an agreement from stakeholders to cooperate on this issue.
- Progress was made in the Republic of Korea on advancing the Korean Refugee Act, and for the first time, the Government granted citizenship to two refugees.

| Working environment |

Irregular movements of people, particularly those undertaking perilous journeys by boat, continued to pose significant challenges in East Asia and the Pacific. The dangers of such journeys were highlighted in December, when a boat crashed into rocks near Christmas Island, claiming the lives of some 50 people.

The detention of increasing numbers of migrants has led to more crowding, tension and incidents of self-harm in detention centres. Maintaining asylum space throughout the region in such an environment remains a significant challenge for UNHCR.

| Achievements and impact |

UNHCR continued to advocate for increased protection for all people of concern and unhindered access to asylum and fair and efficient RSD in the countries making up the East Asia and the Pacific region. This included highlighting needs for improving livelihoods for urban refugees, identifying alternatives to detention for people of concern and preventing statelessness. It also lobbied for the inclusion of refugee protection as a key part of efforts to pursue regional cooperation on mixed migration.

Of particular significance were positive developments in the region arising from the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, where opportunities emerged to discuss refugee protection within the context of mixed migration. UNHCR co-hosted a workshop under the auspices of the Bali Process on Regional Cooperation on Refugees and Irregular Movements, which concluded with a broad agreement to cooperate on a regional approach to irregular movement.

In Australia, UNHCR conducted monitoring missions to immigration detention centres, and advocated against the mandatory detention of asylum-seekers, particularly children and other vulnerable individuals. Late in the year, the Government announced it would progressively move children and vulnerable family groups out of detention. UNHCR continued to inform and advise decision-makers on asylum issues and conducted a number of training sessions for RSD officials.

In China, the Government continued to work on the development of national refugee regulations.

In Hong Kong SAR (China), UNHCR trained the first three of nine groups of government officials under a Memorandum of Understanding on enhanced cooperation. The agreement increased the Government's engagement in and understanding of RSD and reinforced UNHCR's status-determination operation. There was a drop in the number of new asylum applications, from some 820 people in 2009 to some 460 in 2010, which is attributed to UNHCR's application of more effective processing strategies and the Government's adoption of the procedures to review applications pertaining to the Convention Against Torture.

In Mongolia, capacity-building efforts continued in order to support the Government's accession to the 1951 Refugee Convention.

In Japan, positive changes included the introduction of a six-month timeframe for first instance RSD decisions, the establishment of a Detention Monitoring Committee and an



increase in the number of staff working on RSD. Progress was observed in an easing of the criteria for the release of asylum-seekers and refugees from detention. The eCentre continued to build emergency response capacity in Asia and the Pacific. A review of the 10-year partnership between JICA and UNHCR took place and a multi-year agreement was signed on eCentre cooperation.

In New Zealand, UNHCR assisted in implementing the revised Immigration Act, which came into force in November and includes a number of positive changes, such as provisions for complementary forms of protection. UNHCR also presented submissions to, among others, parliamentarians and provided feedback to decision-makers on policy and procedure.

The Republic of Korea hosted the Sub-Regional Round Table on Alternatives to Detention of Asylum-Seekers and Refugees, bringing governments, NGOs and international organizations in the region together. The Office's advocacy efforts in 2010 helped spur progress towards enactment of the Korean Refugee Act, which is designed to provide comprehensive asylum procedures in place of the current Immigration Act. UNHCR welcomed the granting of citizenship to two refugees.

In Papua New Guinea, a comprehensive needs assessment showed gaps in the areas of livelihoods, health, education, water and sanitation for West Papuan refugees. UNHCR gained further ground by advocating with the Government

for the drafting of a national refugee policy and the removal of seven reservations to the 1951 Convention.

Progress was made on immigration legislation and refugee policies in several of the Pacific Island States. UNHCR's development of a Refugee Non-Expulsion Checklist was well received by States and the Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference.

Constraints

Concerns related to national security and the curbing of irregular migration had an impact on the protection of people of concern to UNHCR in the region. The increasing use of detention facilities to hold asylum-seekers and refugees, including children and vulnerable groups, and UNHCR's inability to access them, remained key concerns. Alleviating the situation of many urban refugees and asylum-seekers was challenging, mainly due to limited livelihood opportunities and access to social services in some countries.

Operations

In **Australia**, UNHCR strengthened its relations with both governmental and non-governmental sectors and contributed to the development and implementation of asylum policy in 2010. UNHCR continued to advocate for favourable policies on reception conditions and alternatives to detention. Raising public awareness of asylum and refugee issues by positioning these within a broader regional and global context, also remained a priority.

Resettlement programmes in **Australia** and **New Zealand** for 2010 were maintained at the same levels as in

the previous year. Emergency resettlement submissions increased, as did acceptances, while progress was made in resettling a small but significant number of refugees out of the Pacific Island States. UNHCR continues to advocate for protection-based and geographically balanced resettlement programmes in both countries.

In **China**, UNHCR continued to undertake RSD and provide basic assistance to people of concern and made efforts to improve the protection space for asylum-seekers and refugees. There was some progress in establishing referral mechanisms for health care in some cities and provinces. Efforts to improve access to education for refugees continued. UNHCR facilitated a study on statelessness in southern China.

In the **Hong Kong SAR (China)**, UNHCR continues to run a complex RSD operation and provided basic care for urban refugees, including shelter and living allowances, while the Government provided assistance to asylum-seekers. Throughout the year, UNHCR had full access to people of concern in the territory. In close cooperation with resettlement countries, UNHCR resettled more than 30 cases from the Hong Kong and Macao SARs, including four people who, with UNHCR's assistance, departed under a private sponsorship programme. In the **Macao SAR (China)**, UNHCR assisted the authorities in national RSD procedures.

In **Japan**, the number of recognized refugees increased from 30 in 2009 to almost 40 in 2010. UNHCR continued to help the Ministry of Justice to improve the national asylum system through training, consultations and the submission of recommendations. In 2010 it was reported that there were fewer detained asylum-seekers and no detained minors.

Budget and expenditure in East Asia and the Pacific | USD

Country		PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	Total
Australia Regional Office¹	Budget	1,555,802	0	1,555,802
	Expenditure	1,410,143	0	1,410,143
China Regional Office²	Budget	4,540,077	190,000	4,730,077
	Expenditure	3,629,915	184,632	3,814,547
Japan	Budget	3,726,878	790,000	4,516,878
	Expenditure	3,060,680	780,392	3,841,072
Mongolia	Budget	198,022	33,000	231,022
	Expenditure	134,772	20,356	155,128
Papua New Guinea	Budget	1,275,675	0	1,275,675
	Expenditure	1,076,237	0	1,076,237
Republic of Korea	Budget	1,401,621	97,267	1,498,888
	Expenditure	1,169,968	88,266	1,258,234
Regional activities	Budget	150,000	0	150,000
	Expenditure	21,946	0	21,946
Total budget		12,848,075	1,110,267	13,958,342
Total expenditure		10,503,661	1,073,646	11,577,307

¹Includes activities in New Zealand and 13 Pacific Island countries as well as additional support to Papua New Guinea.

²Provides support to Mongolia.

Furthermore, a semi-independent detention monitoring committee was established.

UNHCR raised awareness on the issue of statelessness by releasing a study on statelessness and a Japanese translation of the statelessness handbook for parliamentarians, as well as organizing and participating in seminars. UNHCR implemented countrywide capacity-building training sessions through the Japan Federation of Bar Associations. The first refugee coordination body was established with UNHCR's support.

High-profile awareness-raising activities, including the Fifth UNHCR Refugee Film Festival, symposia on Somalia and eCentre activities helped create stronger support for refugee protection among the general public in Japan. UNHCR launched the "Arigato, Japan" campaign, highlighting Japan's contributions to refugees and humanitarian situations worldwide. The eCentre also organized eight regional learning events on emergency preparedness and response.

To promote **Mongolia's** accession to the 1951 Refugee Convention and strengthen the protection space, a series of awareness-raising and capacity-building efforts were made in 2010. Advocacy events took place with the participation of civil society, academia, the Constitutional Court, the Association of Executive Assistants (civil servants) and the media. The first commemoration of World Refugee Day in Mongolia was organized in 2010.

In **Papua New Guinea**, UNHCR continued to assist some 2,300 West Papuan refugees in East Awin. Interventions were made in the areas of health, education and livelihoods, focusing on households with specific needs, as well as management of the refugee settlement. UNHCR assisted in the development of a network of community advocates and the identification of three Village Court Areas to ensure access to justice and strengthen the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence.

In the absence of a national framework, UNHCR continued to undertake RSD and provided basic assistance to urban refugees and asylum-seekers. It advocated for the development of a Refugee Policy which would address the situation of some 6,400 West Papuans living in urban and border areas whose status needs to be regularized. Access to refugees in the settlement and border areas remained a major challenge for UNHCR due to the remoteness of their location.

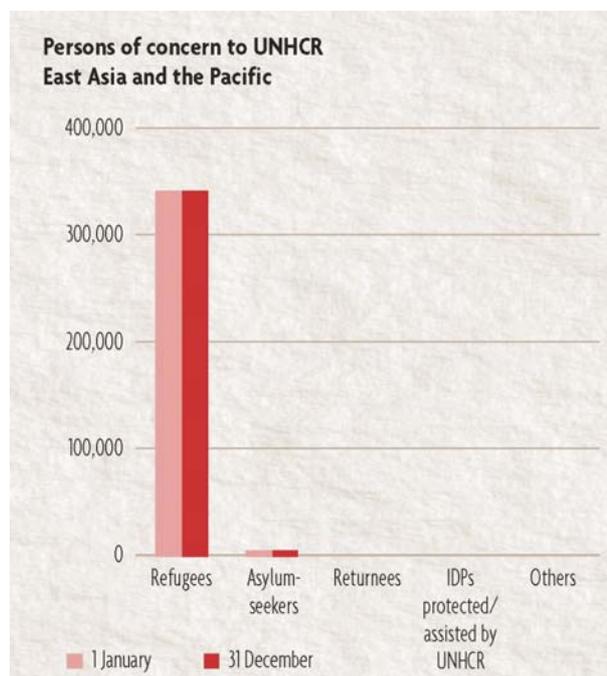
In the **Republic of Korea**, progress was made in raising awareness and addressing the needs of the national asylum system. UNHCR's offer to strengthen the capacity of the judiciary, the RSD entity and other relevant authorities was welcomed by the Government. UNHCR advanced the strengthening of legal aid in asylum processes as well as increased the engagement by NGOs in asylum management. As a result of UNHCR's advocacy the Government is looking to improve reception standards.

UNHCR's annual private-sector income in the Republic of Korea quintupled to USD 600,000 from more than 6,500 committed donors. Through partnership with the Korea Broadcasting Service, a special TV show was aired for World Refugee Day, helping to increase the public's awareness of refugee-related issues. A commemorative stamp was issued by the national postal agency in celebration of the tenth anniversary of World Refugee Day.

In the **Pacific Island States**, the key areas for regional cooperation continued to be training and awareness-raising for border officials and promotion of model refugee policy and legislation, mainly through engagement with the Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference. UNHCR also deepened its relationship with the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme on regional strategies for managing the impact of climate change. As co-lead of the Pacific Humanitarian Protection Cluster, UNHCR has strengthened its role in contingency planning and response in conjunction with national and regional organizations, including the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, other members of the UN Country and Regional Teams in the Pacific, and National Disaster Management Offices.

Financial information

Over 70 per cent of the total requirements from the comprehensive needs assessment in East Asia and the Pacific were met. The overall level of funding enabled UNHCR to maintain its capacity to address the needs of populations of concern and continue key advocacy activities. However, unmet needs remain with regard to, among other issues, support to people of concern in urban areas.



Voluntary contributions to East Asia and the Pacific | USD

Earmarking / Donor	<small>PILLAR 1</small> Refugee programme	All pillars	Total
EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC SUBREGION			
United States of America		6,400,000	6,400,000
East Asia and the Pacific subtotal	0	6,400,000	6,400,000
AUSTRALIA			
Australia	105,845		105,845
Australia subtotal	105,845	0	105,845
JAPAN			
Japan Association for UNHCR	49,915	19,285	69,200
Japan subtotal	49,915	19,285	69,200
Total	155,760	6,419,285	6,575,045

Note: Includes indirect support costs that are recovered from contributions to Pillars 3 and 4, supplementary budgets and the "New or additional activities – mandate-related" (NAM) reserve.